



**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
OF TEXAS**

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AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711

December 3, 1970

Mrs. Marjorie Taber Ogle
Executive Secretary
Board of Vocational Nurse
Examiners
1008 Sam Houston Building
Austin, Texas 78701

Opinion No. M-738

Re: May persons such as
military hospital corpsmen,
who complete nursing courses
which are not accredited
by State Boards of Nursing,
receive credit for such
training or be offered
advanced standing examina-
tions toward a license as a
vocational nurse, under
Article 4528c, V.C.S.

Dear Mrs. Ogle:

In requesting the opinion of this office, you have provided
the following information:

"We receive numerous requests from military
hospital corpsmen, and others who completed nursing
courses in programs which were not accredited by
state boards of nursing, who desire application of
credit toward either enrollment in an approved school
of vocational nursing or for licensing examination.

"The Vocational Nurse Act, Article 4528c of
Vernon's Civil Statutes, Section 5a, requires duration
of enrollment of not less than twelve (12) months in
an accredited school of vocational nursing for eli-
gibility for licensing examination.

"The Board of Vocational Nurse Examiners would like
to know whether schools of vocational nursing could be
permitted to offer advanced standing examinations

(challenging courses). If successful, could credit be applied toward fulfillment of curriculum requirements to the extent of graduation without an actual 12 months time spent in the school? May the Board accept such graduation for licensing examination?"

Among the requirements for admission to the license examination is the following, from Section 5(a), Article 4528c, Vernon's Civil Statutes:

"...and has completed an accredited course of not less than twelve (12) months in an accredited school for training Vocational Nurses. An accredited school as used herein shall mean one accredited by the Board."

The Board of Vocational Nurse Examiners has the duty of prescribing, surveying and accrediting courses of study for individual schools of vocational nursing. Such curricula must, according to statute, be based upon a twelve-month period. We cannot say that in all cases a twelve-month curriculum must result in a student spending precisely twelve months at his or her studies. We view it as being perfectly possible for an industrious and capable student to double up on courses or laboratory work, and thus complete an entire twelve-month curriculum in less than twelve months time, if the curriculum offered by the school and approved by the Board is structured so as to permit such acceleration. If a school desires to offer advanced standing examinations to persons with some prior training, and the Board determines that the basis upon which such examinations are offered properly merges with the requirement for a twelve-month curriculum, it is our view that there would be no violation of either the letter or the spirit of the statute. The key fact is that the individual must clearly demonstrate his educational level in a manner sufficient to qualify him for a certificate of graduation from the school of vocational nursing. Normal procedure will find the great majority of students following the customary steps in the curriculum, but we find nothing improper in permitting particularly qualified individuals to shorten the time period necessary for graduation.

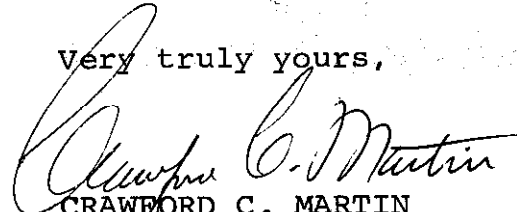
We do not believe that the Board could properly authorize the granting of credit for course work completed at a non-accredited school of nursing, no matter what the reason for such non-accreditation may be. It is our opinion that any educational experience so acquired may be utilized only through advanced standing examinations, if such examinations are acceptable to the Board in the exercise of its sound discretion in approving individual school curricula.

The possession of a certificate of graduation from an accredit school of vocational nursing entitles an individual to admission to the licensing examination conducted by the State Board of Vocational Nurse Examiners.

S U M M A R Y

The Board of Vocational Nurse Examiners has the power to accredit schools of vocational nursing that offer advanced standing examinations to persons who can demonstrate experience and qualification for such examinations.

Very truly yours,


CRAWFORD C. MARTIN
Attorney General of Texas

Prepared by Malcolm Quick
Assistant Attorney General

APPROVED:
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